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Poems
of
*Life in the Country and
By the Sea*



By B. F. Brown





A Quiet Spot. Photo by W. L. Pond. In Brooklyn, Conn.

POEMS

of

Life in the Country

and

By the Sea

by

BENJ. F. BROWN

Fifth Edition, Revised and Richly Illustrated

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COLUMBUS, OHIO

1915



Yours truly
Benj. F. Brown

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INTRODUCTORY

THIS little volume of verses has many lines which, while I read, make me, in imagination, actually present among the scenes and with the associations there portrayed—in fact, these verses are born of my life in the country among the hills and valleys of New England, born of my schooldays in the “schoolhouse on the hill,” of the days on the “old farm,” of the “school exhibitions,” “singing schools,” and many other happy times in childhood, youth, and later years.

I hope these verses may touch the feelings of many who read them, and that, like the treasures in our memories, “while we sit by the fireside and ponder them o'er,” peace may “comfort our hearts like a sweet benediction.”

On the “Old Farm” was the home of my boyhood, and many years ago the home of General Israel Putnam, famous in the records of the War of the Revolution. I cordially welcome the readers of this little book.

B. F. BROWN.



"The day's farewell to the summer night." Photo by Miss Oostdyk
In Michigan

P O E M S

From Life's Experience

THE SUMMER MORN

A blush of pink melting in the blue
With a lingering star just peeping through,
A glow of light where the robin sings,
The breath of the roses' blossomings,
The silvery webs on the meadow grass,
With tiny dewdrops overcast.
The soft air stirred by the waking breeze
To a low sweet song through the leafy trees,
A thrill of joy in our souls newborn,—
All tell of the beautiful summer morn.

—*From "New England Magazine," by B. F. Brown.*

THE SUNSET

A royal gem was the rosy west,
Of heaven's works the loveliest,
Draped with a sheen of opal light,
The day's farewell to the summer night.

We watched while the Artist changed its tone,
Till the brightest tints had softer grown,
And as we gazed on the picture fair,
We felt the hand of the Master there.

POEMS FROM LIFE'S EXPERIENCE

THE CURTAIN OF NIGHT

Over the shadowy trees it falls,
Over the ivy-mantled walls,
Over each stone and silent grave,
Over the church from tower to nave,
Over the city that tries in vain
To win its light the day again,

Over the sea till each darkening roll
Grown darker and black like a ruined soul,
Over us all with insistent creep
Falls the curtain of night
Till the world is asleep.

The curtain of night, ah! who can say
When, never again it will end the day,
Or, when will appear its last uproll
Through the endless blue tow'rd its mystic goal

FALLING LEAVES

Falling leaves, falling leaves,
Back to earth,
Back to the source that gave them birth.
So do we, life's voyage past,
Take down the sails, release the mast,
And willing, cross the storm-lashed beach
Our Father's welcome home to reach.



"Over the shadowy trees it falls."
Photo by Daines & Nichols. Part College Campus,
Ann Arbor, Mich.

THE WINTER DAY

Bright is the dawn of the winter morn
And icy the winds that blow
Through the valleys and over the hills,
Curling the drifts of snow.

The storm is over, the stars grow dim,
The moon sinks in the west,
A rosy glow on the hills of snow,
A morning with beauty blest.

In the forest nook, by the ice-bound brook,
The pine trees wear a shroud,
And over their green its folds are seen
White as a summer cloud.

Now the sleigh bells ring, and the horses fling
Their hoofs on the polished road,
And the happy throng, as they glide along,
Is life with joy o'erflowed.

There's a charming play of the winter day
On the heart, with a touch that thrills,
And the cords of life grow strong for strife
And the soul with courage fills.



The Winter Day. In Connecticut

THE SCHOOL EXHIBITION

The skool exhibition, why a'nt you a-goin'?
They say that our skolars will make a big showin';
The hull skool cummity will be there ter-night,
And the children will bring lots of candles to light.

Down in the Smith Valley they had one last night,
And them as has seen, sed 'twan't much of a sight;
And in the Jones deestrick they didn't do well,
But we'll show 'em how, make 'em think for a snell.

Jim's a-practicin' now, every evening this week,
He's up in the atick, you kin hear his boots squeak;
He's goin' ter speak of an Injun so brave
That he'd swim till he drowned, 'fore he'd be a darn
slave.

You know, our Salomie'll stand up and recite,
She'll look terribul nice, goin' ter dress all in white.
Jed Stebbins, he's borrowed a yaller box sleigh,
Throw'd out all ther seats, put in sum bog hay.

An' reckins he'll carry ez many's a dozen,
By usin' two hosses, got one from his cuzin.
Cy, he'll do the drivin' and Jed pack 'em in,
They're sure ter git there 'fore the show will begin.

Don't sit there a-smokin', just finish yer chores,
Put on yer black trowsers, them others is tore;
Be sure and start arly, take Jim and Salome,
After washin' the dishes, I'll ride down with Jerome

CROWS IN THE CORN FIELD

Hang them old crows, they pull up the corn,
The thievingest critters that ever were born;
Dad sez, "If we get one," he'll give us a quarter;
That "if" 's a high fence and I think that he'd orter

I took that old gun and shot at 'em twice,
But they didn't care, the corn was too nice,
So I just fired again, hit one in the tail
And then they flew off, had plenty of sail.

Say, Billy, I'm full of a dandy idee,—
Way back in our woods is a tall chestnut tree;
There's a nest near the top, for I heard the "caw, caw"
Of a crow flying there, 'twas the little crow's maw

A crow is a crow whether old or it's young,
If we get all those young ones, why Dad will be stung;
So we'll shin up the tree, I bet we'll get four,
And that will knock Dad for a dollar or more.

I expect he will squeal, but that won't do any good,
Them young ones are eating his corn for their food;
A quarter for one means a dollar for four,
And if he hesitates, we'll stick him for more.

POEMS FROM LIFE'S EXPERIENCE

ON THE OLD FARM

Far away on the dear old farm
Is a home with a lasting charm,
 Old and gray;
Its roof with moss is covered
Where the waving branches hovered
 Many a day.

How often has the dawning
Of a beautiful June morning,
 Long ago,
At my window blushed while telling
Of the roses sweetly smelling,
 Just below.

The beauty, like a blessing,
Of Nature, sweet, caressing,
 Filled the air;
The woods and fields were glorious,
And summer reigned victorious
 Everywhere.

In meadows sweet with haying
We, happy children playing,
 Wandered free;
The birds sang gaily o'er us
While we would join the chorus,
 Full of glee.

The round-eyed daisies, spying
The blue where clouds were flying,
 Seemed to say:
"Though sweet at times life's story,
Up yonder lies its glory,
 Far away."



"The round-eyed daisies, spying." Photo by Phil M. Riley

POEMS FROM LIFE'S EXPERIENCE

Beside the brooklet flowing
We found fair gentians growing,
 Heavenly blue;
And later, nuts delicious
Encased in burrs malicious,
 Two by two.

Of work we made a pleasure
In filling many a measure,
 Husking corn;
Plump turkeys, 'round us feeding,
Thanksgiving all unheeding,
 Fatal morn.

By fireside's ruddy glow,
Outside, the drifting snow,—
 We would meet;
With apples, ripe and red,
And nuts on table spread,
 Such a treat.

And as the flames leaped higher
We, gazing in the fire,
 Seemed to see
Old Santa Claus, gifts bringing,
While Christmas bells were ringing
 Merrily.

We had no thought of sorrow,
'Twas joy today, tomorrow,
 Then,—always.

Ah, me, as years grow older,
The world seems hard and colder,
 Shorn of rays.

But far beyond its toiling,
Beyond its sad turmoiling,
 Shines the light
Of Heaven, a joy forever,
Where the bright day shall never
 End in night.



" 'Twas joy today tomorrow,' The Old Farm Gate

THE RAINY DAY IN JULY

In the old red barn on a rainy day,
In the old red barn where the new-mown hay
Is piled up high to the rafters near,
So near that the swallows shake with fear,
You will find the boys in haying time;
Up the ladder they love to climb,
To tumble and roll in the fragrant hay,
For this is surely a holiday.

Softly the patter of rain o'erhead
Like music tempts them to make their bed,
To lie and sleep 'mid the odors sweet
While the swallows twitter a tete-a-tete:
And the tingle on the shingles
Of the rain-drops falling fast,
Tells to them a pleasant story,
That all day the rain will last.

They have worked so hard in the long hot days,
So hard in the field where the sun's hot rays
Have tired them out, that they love to keep
Up in the hay-mow fast asleep;
And this rainy day in hot July
To the farmer boys, like a berry pie
That mother made, is a welcome treat
And the rest they gain is a rest complete.

"In hot July."



THE COUNTRY BOY

On a tick filled with straw, sleeping soundly he lay,
A sleep that was perfect, for labor, part pay;
No youth in the city could ever enjoy
The pleasure of rest as much as that boy.

The calls of the morning awaken the lad,
Shirt, pants, one suspender, enough, he's full clad;
Not a minute is wasted, for all of the cows
Must be milked before sunrise and turned out to
browse.

No short hours of labor has this country boy,
He knows that no farmer could that way enjoy;
For when winter arrived the purse would be lean
And a struggle till springtime the only path seen.

After breakfast 'tis pleasant, in garden and field
To work with a will for a good harvest yield,
There's planting and hoeing and haying-time, too,
And two holidays, just jewels for you.

'Twas no hardship to work, how often I think
Of the days, hoeing corn, how the proud bobolink
Just sings till his throat seems bursting with glee
And all of his song is intended for me.

O, don't you remember the day at the fair,
Every one whom you knew was sure to be there,
And bashful and awkward, your feelings awhirl,
You could look, more than talk, when you met that
dear girl.



The Watering Place. From Engraving of Painting by James Hart

POEMS FROM LIFE'S EXPERIENCE

In winter the parties, the sleighing, the school,
The games played at noontime, be fair was the rule;
The good-night at the ending, the slide down the hill,
And pleasures, full many, the winter would fill.

O, boys in the cities, who think that you live
And have better times than the country can give;
Know this to be true, that the bright country lad
Has pleasures far more than you ever have had.

Fast life in the city, like brass covered with gold,
Becomes artificial and spoils when it's old;
But life in the country, lived true to the end,
Has all nature's charms that life to befriend.

WILD STRAWBERRIES

There were plenty of them in the "sidehill" lot,
And how we would search for the thickest spot:
In June was the time for the largest yield,
But 'twas hoeing time in the big cornfield,
Just so many rows we must hoe in a day
Before we could leave and scamper away;
And so we would start in the early morn
To hoe out the weeds in that field of corn.

By working hard, a short rest at noon,
We would finish by middle of afternoon,
And then with a will, no time to waste.
We would rush to that place for a strawberry taste.
When our pails were full we would pick and eat,
In vain to resist, they were luscious and sweet;
For supper that night, with sugar and cream
And new bread and butter a feast it would seem;

POEMS FROM LIFE'S EXPERIENCE

We would empty our saucers and ask for more,
Strawberries, strawberries, berries galore.
Then the cows must be milked, pigs and chickens fed
And the chores all done, we were ready for bed.
Picking wild strawberries, those days in June
When Nature seems singing in perfect tune,
Then hurrying home ere the sun has set
Is a picture fair in my memory yet.



Photo by Beckwith. "In the sidehill lot."

In Michigan.

THE VACATION REST

Here in the country a few short weeks,
Here where Nature its language speaks,
Speaks with a voice that is sweet and low,
Speaks with its beauties' overflow.
Over me gaily the white clouds sail,
Over each hill and fertile vale,
Songs of the birds and low of the kine,
Songs never written and all are mine.
Gone are the worries, toil, and strife,
Gone are the burdens of city life;
Life while I linger is passing sweet.
Life full of joy that is joy complete.

The lights and shadows o'er waving grass
Like fairies dance when the cloudlets pass;
In the valley of peace the river glides,
Seeking afar for the ocean tides.
Grassy the banks, and the odors sweet
Of the lilies' bloom near the birds' retreat.
Go to the country a few short weeks,
Go where Nature its language speaks.
Go, yes go, though you go alone,
For, your strength increased, your cares o'erthrown,
The storms of life will try in vain
To wreck your bark when home again.



"Gone are the burdens of city life." Photo by Beckwith
In Michigan

POEMS FROM LIFE'S EXPERIENCE

GOING A FISHING

'Twas a day I shall always remembe,
A most beautiful day in September.

 Not a cloud in the sky
 And our spirits were high;
Life, with us, was far from an ember

All the summer we boys had been wishing
For the time when we could go fishing,
 So we cut some birch poles,
 Dug the worms from mud holes,
While mother our luncheon was dishing.

Then we harnessed old black and the gray,
Hitched them fast to an ancient coupé,
 Put in bait, hook and line,
 Stuck the poles out behind,
And our rollicking crew sped away.

By upland and valley and meadow,
'Neath cloudland and sunlight and shadow,
 Down the white sandy road
 Where the goldenrod glowed
Near the red of the sumac, in yellow.

Soon the pond, a fair picture in blue,
And some flat-bottomed boats came in view;
 So we slackened our speed,
 Tied the horses for feed,
And bid summer's labor adieu.

O that day, it was surely a winner,
For we caught lots of fishes for dinner,
 And with appetites big,
 Drove home in our rig,
Eat them all, or else, I'm a sinner



"And some flat-bottomed boats came in view."

POEMS FROM LIFE'S EXPERIENCE

GIDEON SMITH, THE JOINER

"Carpenter & Joiner," that was his sign,
But he'd join everything that entered his mind;
The first baby show in the old Town Hall
He joined and joined in the baby squall.

Later he joined in the primary class,
Joined the teacher in kissing a beautiful lass,
Joined in the singing, then joined in the prayer,
And in every quarrel that happened there.

Still later, when larger and able to play,
Joined all the ball clubs that came in his way;
He joined in licking the umpire, too,
Whenever the chap wouldn't join in his view.

O, that Gideon Smith, he joined the church
And societies, all he could find by search,
The Masons, the Elks, the Odd Fellows, too.
Why, he joined them all and longed for new.

He joined with Salomie in wedlock bands,
Then joined with the preacher in holding her hands;
He joined in living with her the life
That made them happy, as man and wife.

He joined the crowd that went to his grave,
But there, left alone, just his record to save.
He concluded to leave and join Gideon's band
And in singing the songs in the heavenly land.

THOSE COWHIDE BOOTS

How well I remember in days of old
Those cowhide boots in the village sold,
How every boy must have a pair
In winter days for him to wear:
Then with woolen stockings his mother knit
And bright new boots his feet to fit
He would feel as proud as any king
When towards the school he was hurrying.

And when the snows of winter came,
If wet his feet, he was to blame,
For beeswax, tallow and neatsfoot oil,
All melted hot, was the kind of spoil
He must rub on his boots, for his father said,
"Boys, grease your boots 'fore you go to bed,
Then put them behind the stove to dry,
And do it now, not by and by."

At morning, ere the rise of sun,
The forenoon chores must all be done,
Then buckwheat cakes and maple syrup
Unending appetite would stir up;
Next, in deep snow 'twas pure delight
To wear those boots with pants tied tight
Around the legs for barricade,
A wise protection mother made.

From tramping in the snow till night
Those boots would shrink till awful tight,
The bootjack seemed the only way
To pull them off—they meant to stay.
Sometimes your brother, very kind,
While you with one foot pushed behind,
Between his legs would take the other
And pull till ended was your bother.

POEMS FROM LIFE'S EXPERIENCE

WINTER

How the wind whistles and rattles the blinds
While the rain and sleet strike the window panes,
And the Storm-King marshals his hosts and finds
Every place where a hole or crevice remains.

The snow sifts in when the gusts fly past,
The drifts whirl over the garden wall,
The storms of winter are here at last
Draping the sky with a leaden pall.

The back-log lies in the wide fireplace,
And the burning embers search its heart,
While the glowing fire creeps on apace,
Tearing its sinews of oak apart.

Let the storm go on, we defy the cold,
We are cosy and warm in the lamp-lit room,
While the apples roast in the ashes old
And the walnuts crack to meet their doom

We gather around the fireside now
And talk of the days in the long ago,
Of the glorious times we had and how
We would race our steeds over ice and snow.

Let the winter come, there are joys it brings
To the boys and girls, to the young and old:
Every snow-clad hill in the moonlight sings
Of the "mansions fair and the streets of gold."



"How the wind whistles and rattles the blinds."
Photo by W. Mizunuma. In Oregon

AFTER HUCKLEBERRIES

Did you ever go for berries in the pasture lot,
Go barefoot, where thistles prick, to find the thickest
spot?

Six-quart pails you used to fill, nothing else would do,
Mother wanted them for pies, and 'twas up to you.

In those August days, you know, it was awful hot,
Largest berries never grew in a shady spot;
So when you were melting fast, tired from the heat,
You would break the bushes down, find a shady seat.

Underneath those big oak trees, just a mile from school,
There you'd pick the berries off, feeling nice and cool;
Then you'd go and break some more, bring a big pile
back,
Dodging thistles here and there and the wasp's attack.

You would never go alone, all the neighbors knew
Where to send their boys and girls, where best berries
grew,
So there was a jolly time, every pail was full,
When suddenly appeared in sight the farmer's angry
bull.

He bellowed loud and pawed the earth, we scampered
towards the wall
And safely reached the other side with no one hurt
at all.
But berries! there they stayed all day, and there they
stayed all night,
And there, perhaps, they're staying now if that big
bull's in sight.



"Did you ever go for berries in the pasture lot?" Photo by Beckwith. In Michigan

POEMS FROM LIFE'S EXPERIENCE

IN MEMORY'S CHAMBER

In the chamber of memory are beautiful treasures,
Enticing us often to enter its doors;
Its pictures are full of the dearest of pleasures,
And, O, how we long just to live them once more.
How swift sped the hours, how bright was the sunlight.
How happy the seasons those pictures recall,
Through the veil of the past their radiance glimmers,
Like the glow of the sunset when night shadows fall.

One canvas, presenting a scene of my childhood,
Shows sweet little faces and white slumber clothes
Encircling the fireside, whose bright, sparkling embers
Discover the darlings just warming their toes.
Another I see,—now the years have grown older,
And softly the moonlight its drapery throws
Round a beautiful face, nestling close to my shoulder
Enchanting and sweeter than June's blushing rose.

There are moments so precious, they sparkle like diamonds,
There are hours rich as rubies, whose record is there
There are days, like rare gems, when the blue arch of
Heaven
Seems the curtain of Paradise, wondrously fair.
These treasures are ours, ours now and forever,
Their beauty unfading, time adds to their store;
Peace comforts our hearts, like a sweet benediction,
While we sit by the firelight and ponder them o'er.

AUTHOR

Brewer, J. C. Jr.
Country by the
Sea

TITLE

Book No. 7
re 7896

Book No.

Study Table No.

Study Room No.

(Name)

(Address)

SEE REVERSE SIDE OF THIS SLIP FOR REPORT

16-361

[OVER]

READING ROOM

REPORT

INSTRUCTIONS

<input type="checkbox"/>	OUT
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<input type="checkbox"/>	IN EXHIBITION COLLECTION
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"How happy the seasons those pictures recall." Photo by Beckwith. In Michigan

POEMS FROM LIFE'S EXPERIENCE

A SONG

THE HILLS OF OLD NEW ENGLAND

O, the hills of old New England,
How the pictures comes and go
As my fancy paints their beauty
'Mid the scenes of long ago;
The old home beneath the maples
Where the happy children play,
E'en now their voices reach me
Till it seems but yesterday.

On a hill of old New England
By the spreading boughs of green
Stands the schoolhouse of my boyhood;
Many years now roll between—
Let the past become the present,
Brush the mists of years away,
And once more upon that hillside
Life is all a holiday.

O, the hills of old New England,
Rolling on 'neath summer skies,
Forest-crowned or waving verdure,
How their glory fills our eyes;
Many lands I've traveled over,
On their sunny slopes to rest,
But the hills of old New England
Are the ones I love the best.



"O, the hills of old New England, rolling on 'neath summer skies." Deerfield, Mass.

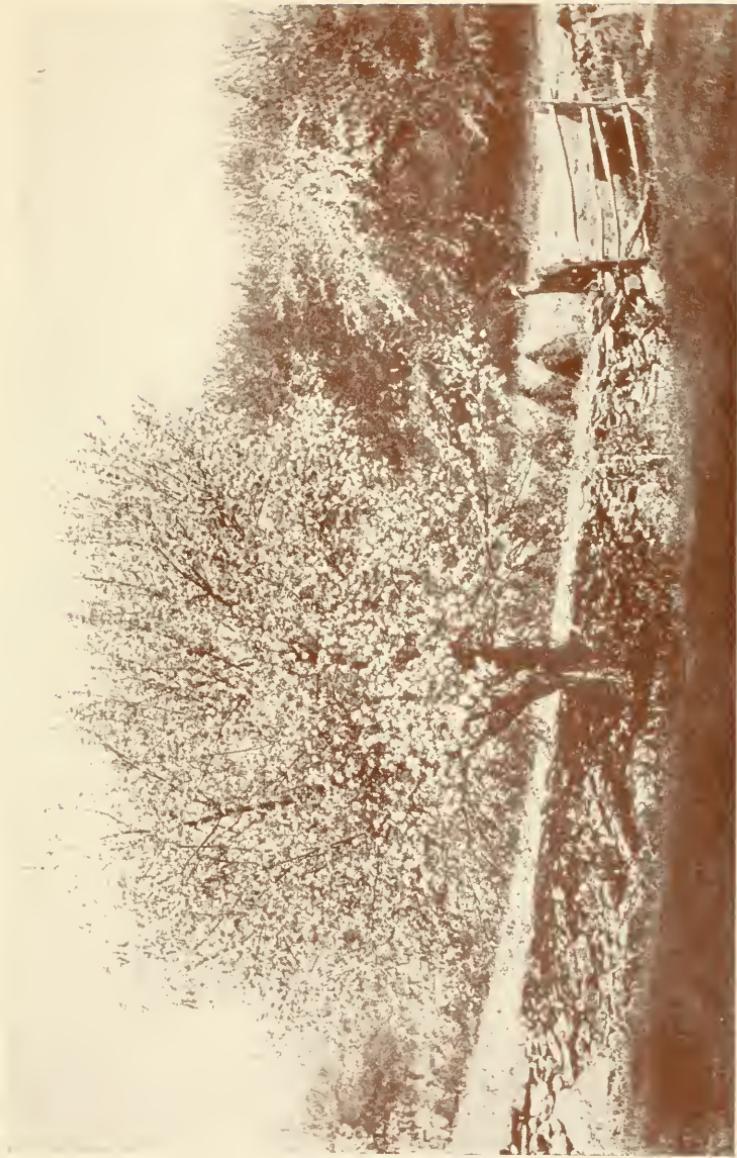
POEMS FROM LIFE'S EXPERIENCE

O, the hills of old New England,
Would you all their beauty know;
See them in the winter moonlight,
When their brows are white with snow;
When the Ice-King drapes their shoulders
And like sentinels they stand,
Ever watching, cold and silent,
'Till the morn breaks o'er the land.

O, the hills of old New England,
Could their stories all be told,
Of the joys and griefs among them
In the days now growing old;
Many hearts would throb with pleasure,
Many tears perchance might flow,
But we long once more to linger
Round those hills of long ago.

REFRAIN

O, their beauty in the springtime,
In the morn or sunset glow,
Fairer still in breath of summer,
Glorious in winter's snow;
O, the hills of old New England,
How my heart with rapture thrills,
As I wander back in mem'ry
To those old New England hills.



From Painting by F. W. Raetz, Germany

POEMS FROM LIFE'S EXPERIENCE

THE SINGING SCHOOL

Now all together, high from low,
Do, ra, mi, fa, sol, la, ci, do;
Just follow me and sing just so,
Do, ci, la, sol, fa, mi, ra, do.

The violin as he swings the bow
Brings out the sounds, now high, now low,
And the teacher, singing and playing, too,
Is an awesome sight to his country crew.

“And now,” he says, “I will voices test;
You, Thomas Jones, just sing your best.”
And Tom gives forth a rumbling roar,
A bass untrimmed and something more.

“Now, Mary Ann, it’s up to you;
Just show me now what you can do.”
And the healthy blonde, with the yellow hair,
Soprano proves while the hearers stare.

“A voice I heard in the rear end seat,
Will Billy Smith the tone repeat?”
Then Smith, he gave a piercing yell,
Till the oil lamps shook, ‘twas a tenor spell.

“An alto now we want to hear,
I think we have one sitting near.”
And Nellie sang, a voice so sweet,
That all the school said, “Please repeat.”

And so he picked them, one by one,
Till finally the task was done;
And singing school in the old town hall
Was started in the early fall.

POEMS FROM LIFE'S EXPERIENCE

THE WRECK OF THE TITANIC

There was wealth of beauty and wealth of gold
Of value naught 'gainst a fate untold.
The humble, poor, and the millionaire,
As the ship went down grew equal there.

Down in the depths their forms will rest,
But far above from the regions blest
Came the Father's love and His helping hand
To give them life in the Better Land.

We never dream that our span of life
May be cut short, while pleasure's rife;
But, listen,—this the ages chime,
Life here is dust on the wheels of time.

THE RIVER OF LIFE

There's many a snag in the river of life
And winding its current and way,
Our bark must be steered through the storm and
strife
To reach the safe harbor some day.

There's many a path leading through the mist
That covers the future, that will be missed;
We can only hope, that among them all,
The one we find will have little fall.

There's many a day when losing sight,
The way seems dark, no beacon light;
And we can not tell which way to go
Then comes the thought, that He will know.

POEMS FROM LIFE'S EXPERIENCE

SUNRISE IN LIFE

BABY ROB

Little eyes of blue and rosy cheeks,
Smiles and dimples when mother speaks
Golden ringlets round tiny ears,
Always so jolly, never in tears;
A sweet little voice no language knowing
But baby laughter and baby crowing,
Bright as an angel from above,
Born for happiness, born to love;
Could ever there be a sight more fair
Than baby Rob with the golden hair?

SUNSET IN LIFE

THE TWO OLD MEN

They sat by the old fireplace,
Smoking their pipes in peace,
Having done their part in life,
From toil they had reached release;
They talked and laughed, and told
Of things in the old home town,
Of the boys they used to know
Who now had gained renown

Each saw in memory's hall
Bright scenes and happy days.
And many mistakes they made
In the parting of the ways;
But now, they'd certainly be
Like Solomon, very wise,
And, feeling they knew it all,
The rest of the boys advise.



Baby Rob

THE SWELL, MOLLIE AND THE LILIES

From the city he came in his suit of pure white,
Hat, stockings and shoes, just the same, his delight;
He intended to stay just a week at the farm,
A sweet country girl living there was the charm.
He thought, dressed so nice and with cigarette too,
Country boys would abscond when he came in view;
But Tom, Jim, and Harry just laughed at the sight
And vowed they would fix him before it was night.

So the boys winked at Mollie, who drew him away
And said, "I do want some pond lilies today,
There's a lot in the pond, 'tis a beautiful walk."
And he, thus enticed, grew soft in his talk.
Then through the soft meadow so lightly she trod,
He, eager to follow, sank his feet in the sod,
Mollie, laughing, called back, "O, leave your shoes there,
For when we get home Jim will lend you a pair."

Over walls, bogs, and briars she led him with ease,
He stumbled and fell, tore his pants from his knees,
Mollie then looking back just laughed till she cried
When she saw a tree branch rip his coat off one side
And puncture his hat which was caught by the way
He was trying to save a few clothes in the fray.
"Never mind," shouted Mollie, when we go home tonight
Tom will lend you some clothes, but they're not very
white."

Now the pond soon appeared, a most beautiful sight,
With lilies a plenty, just a scene of delight;
He determined to win and get lilies galore,
But sank in the mud not far from the shore.
Mollie called, and the boys with ropes yanked him out
All streaked and black, just a ragged dish clout:
Then the country crowd cried, "Go take the next train
And don't dress in white if you come here again."



Mollie and the Lilies
Photo by De Vault. In Michigan

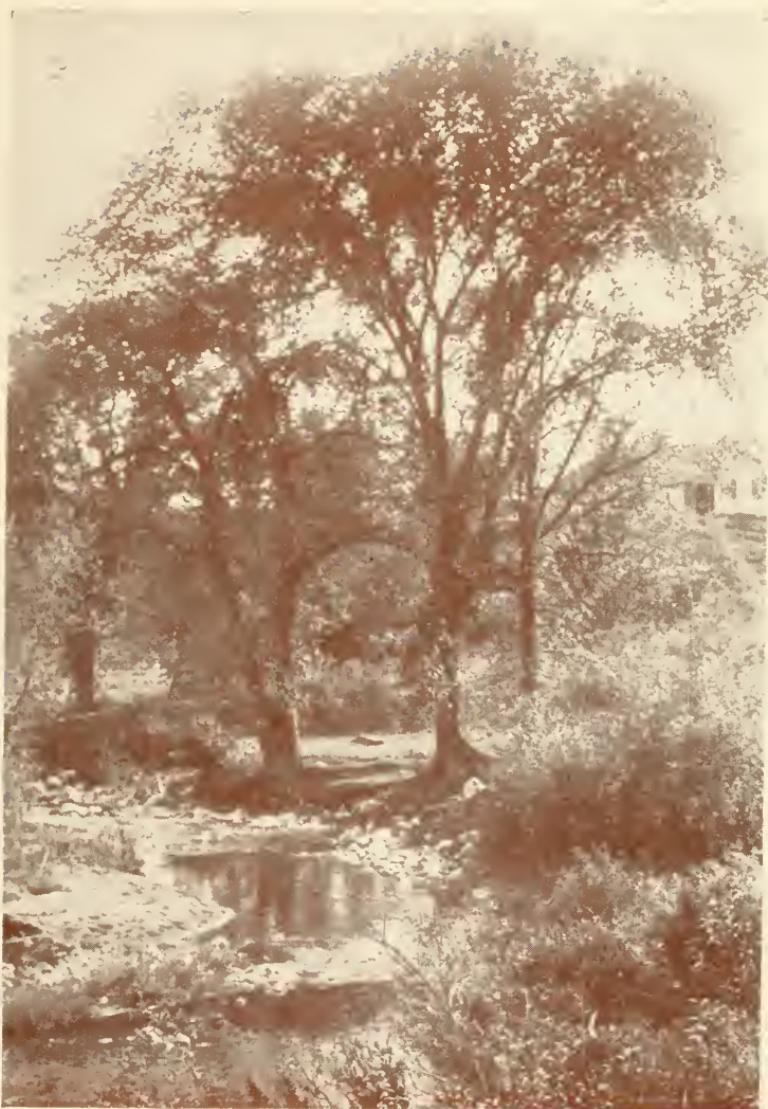
A SONG

BENEATH THE OLD ELM TREE

I wandered near the old home
Where, in the long ago,
There lived a happy maiden
Who kept my heart aglow;
I sat, where oft we lingered,
Beneath the old elm tree,
And in my memory captured
Her voice of melody.

Her smiling face, enchanting,
Drew near, and I could see
Her witching roguish glances,
Lovelight bestowed on me,
And in my dream I held
Her dear warm hand in mine,
And once more felt the rapture
Of love almost divine.

Then waking, gazed about me,
The night grew dark and cold;
Alas! 'twas but a vision,
My days were growing old;
With longing I reached backward
To grasp those days of yore,—
The elm tree branches whispered,
Soft whispered, “nevermore.”



"I wandered near the old home." Photo by Dr. E. F. Beckwith
In Michigan

POEMS FROM LIFE'S EXPERIENCE

NATURE'S PLAY

Blue is the sky dome over the green,
Golden the sunshine sifting between
Branches that lazily sway in the breeze,
Showering the shadows under the trees
With arrows of light from the quiver of noon,
By the bow whose arch is the bright sky of June

Sweet is the air with the perfume of flowers
Yielding their life through the long sunny hours;
With the song of the birds and the kiss of the dawn
To give them a welcome, their beauty was born.
And now seeks the sun its nightly repose,
While over its couch drapes a curtain of rose.

The clouds rolling upward in waves from the west,
Wear the colors of heaven with silvery crest,
Where the moon proudly sailing disperses her light
Till the little stars modestly creep out of sight.
These beautiful charms of the night and the day
Are glorious acts in Nature's grand play.

A SONG

A BUNCH OF VIOLETS

Only a bunch of violets sweet,
Only a vision of heavenly blue;
Only blue eyes they love to meet,
Only a token of love for you.
Only a little gift 'tis true.
Yet when you look with your eyes of blue
Over them fondly with tender care,
Surely my love will meet you there.



"With arrows of light from the quiver of noon."
Photo by Oliver T. Waite. In Penn.

POEMS FROM LIFE'S EXPERIENCE

Only a bunch of violets sweet,
Telling the story of lovely spring;
Shyly they bloom where the birds retreat
Near by the woodland their songs to sing
Blue are the skies on a summer day,
Blue are the hills in the far-away;
Blue are these violets, yet, 'tis true,
Lovelier still are your eyes of blue.

REFRAIN

Only a bunch of violets sweet,
Only blue eyes they love to meet;
So do I send them with joy to you,
Breathing my love in these violets blue.

AFTER THE SHOWER

After the shower comes a golden refrain,
Nature smiling through tears, joy-tears from the rain;
After the showers, showers that gladden the earth,
Blade, blossom, and leaf feel the joy of new birth.
After our trials are fought one by one,
Life strengthens and glows when the victory's won.
After we've wandered astray in life's vale
Comes a brighter outlook when we strike the right trail.

"After the showers comes a golden refrain." Photo by Frank Laing. In Maine



POEMS FROM LIFE'S EXPERIENCE

PEEP, PEEP, PEEP

Way down in the swamp, by the pasture near,
Peep, peep, peep,
The first voices of spring, spring actually here.
Peep, peep, peep,
They are little peep-frogs
In invisible togs,
Peep, peep, peep,
When the twilight descends
Thus they call to their friends,
"Spring gently awakes
From our long slumber takes
Till we
Peep, peep, peep."

A QUARTET OF WILD FLOWERS

YELLOW COWSLIPS

Out in the woods in the early spring
When the joy of birds just makes them sing ;
Down in the swamp where the alders grow,
'Twixt mossy bogs where dull water flow ;
With bright green leaves, near the mosses old
Are the early cowslips with hues of gold.

What a joy supreme, just to wander there
From bog to bog, look out ! take care !
Then a careless tread betrays your feet
And their muddy tops is mud complete ;
A few more steps and you make a pull
For the solid ground with your basket full



“Peep, peep, peep.”
“Out in the woods in early spring.”
Photo by Dr. E. F. Beckwith. In Michigan

POEMS FROM LIFE'S EXPERIENCE

The songs of spring are in the air,
The swelling buds their faith declare
That the winter days are past and gone
And the green-trimmed boughs are hastening on
To make the woods a leafy bower
Where the sunlight shoots its arrow shower.

DAISIES

Daisies purple, daisies white,
Ox-eyed daisies, golden bright;
Every little blossom knows,
When the summer south wind blows
Waving grassy slopes in June,
That its short life endeth soon.

So it uses all its power,
Buds are opening every hour,
Fields of daisies, purest white
Glisten in the soft sunlight,
Gaily dotted here and there
Where the happy children are.

Picking all they want and more,
Making daisy chains galore,
Shouting, laughing, full of glee,
Not a care, from labor free.
Daisy time in leafy June
Perfect chord in Nature's tune.

POÉMÉS FROM LIFE'S EXPERIENCE

PEACE

On the moonlit sands by the summer sea,
Above, the vast infinity,
Full of celestial harmony;
Around, a sweet tranquility,
The slumbering day's last lullaby,
Stilled by the night's soft witchery.
We sit and dream.

The world is gone with yesterday;
Beyond, is all a mystery,
Now, from the Night's divinity,
Falls with her beauteous drapery,
Falls on our souls like melody,
A happy peace.



“Daisies purple, daisies white.” In Conn.

BLUE FRINGED GENTIAN

Blue fringed gentian
Claims attention
In September hours;
Born of sunlight,
'Tis its birthright,
Queen of all wild flowers.

You must travel
To unravel
Questions where to find it;
One year, hither,
Next year, thither;
Leaves no trace behind it.

By the brookside
Near the noontide,
There its beauty glows;
Buds uplifted,
Opened, rifted,
When the sunshine flows

Sky blue tinges,
Dainty fringes
'Round their lovely bells;
Is the story
Of their glory
That the vision tells.



Blue Fringed Gentians. Photo by W. L. Pond
In Conn.

POEMS FROM LIFE'S EXPERIENCE

GOLDENROD

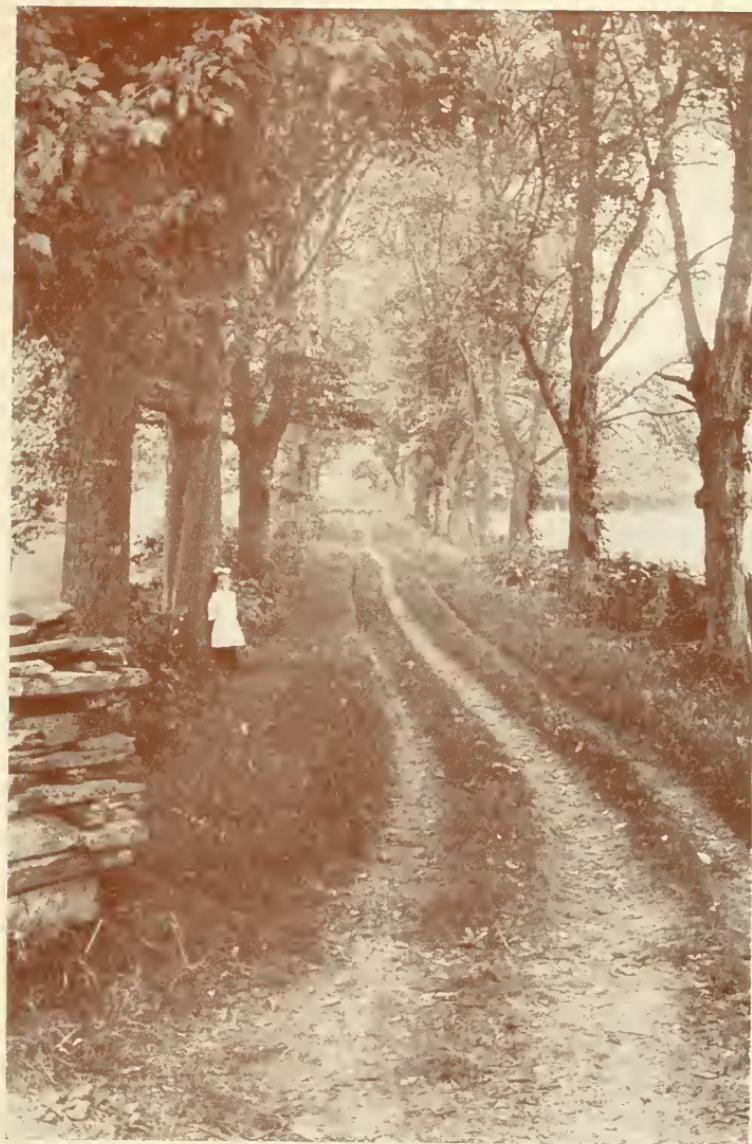
Near the old stone wall, by the country road,
Close by the fence, after fields are mowed,
Bowing politely, to those who have trod
Over the hills, is the goldenrod.

All day long with the winds at play,
Growing in beauty day by day;
Counting its bloom as a mass of gold,
Despising all others as poor and old.

O, the goldenrod is a proud young thing
And sways its head with a saucy fling.
But when you meet it and stop a while,
It greets you then with a winning smile.

THE BLUSH OF DAWN

'Neath the starry dome, from its eastern rim
Timid and pale, comes the daylight dim;
A blush appears as the waking dawn
Approaches night, tells of day unborn.
Her blushes startle, impel the night
With star-trimmed mantle to take its flight;
The blushes vanish, their work is done,
For brightly shines the rising sun.



"Near the old stone walls by the country road."
Photo by W. L. Pond. In Brooklyn, Conn.

IN THE HIGH-BACK SLEIGH

Over the hills in the high-back sleigh,
Over the hills on that sunny day,
Diamonds on shrubs and ice-bound trees
Flashed when stirred by the morning breeze,
For the winter night of mist and rain
Had trimmed them over and over again.

Over the hills in the high-back sleigh
With buffalo robes the cold to stay,
And soap-stones hot, wrapped snug and neat
In grandma's shawl to warm your feet,
One hand sufficient the horse to guide,
One arm to keep close by your side

The dearest girl you ever knew,
With rosy cheeks and eyes of blue,
And 'neath her hood strayed many a curl,
Her smiles to wreath, your head to whirl.
'Twas a joy supreme that winter day
Over the hills in the high-back sleigh.

Over the hills in the high-back sleigh—
When memory brings the far-away,
You can almost hear the sleigh-bells ring
And see the white fields hurrying
By, as they did that sunny day
When you rode with her in the high-back sleigh.



"Diamonds on shrubs and ice-bound trees." Eastman Kodak Co.

ALWAYS WEAR A SMILE

There's never a darkened forest
That the sunlight doesn't peep in
And help each budding plant
A beautiful life to win.

There's never a raging tempest
No power of man can quell,
But He, who rules the storm,
Speaks peace, and all is well.

There's never a day so dreary,
Or a night so sad and lone,
But passing, life is brighter
If we live its purest tone.

There's never a cloud so darksome.
Or a shadow across the way,
But will vanish like dew in the meadows
In the morn of a summer day.

So fight life's battle bravely
And always wear a smile,
Compared with a lasting victory,
'Tis fight but a little while.



"And help each budding plant a beautiful life to win."
Photo by De Vault. In Michigan

THE SEA

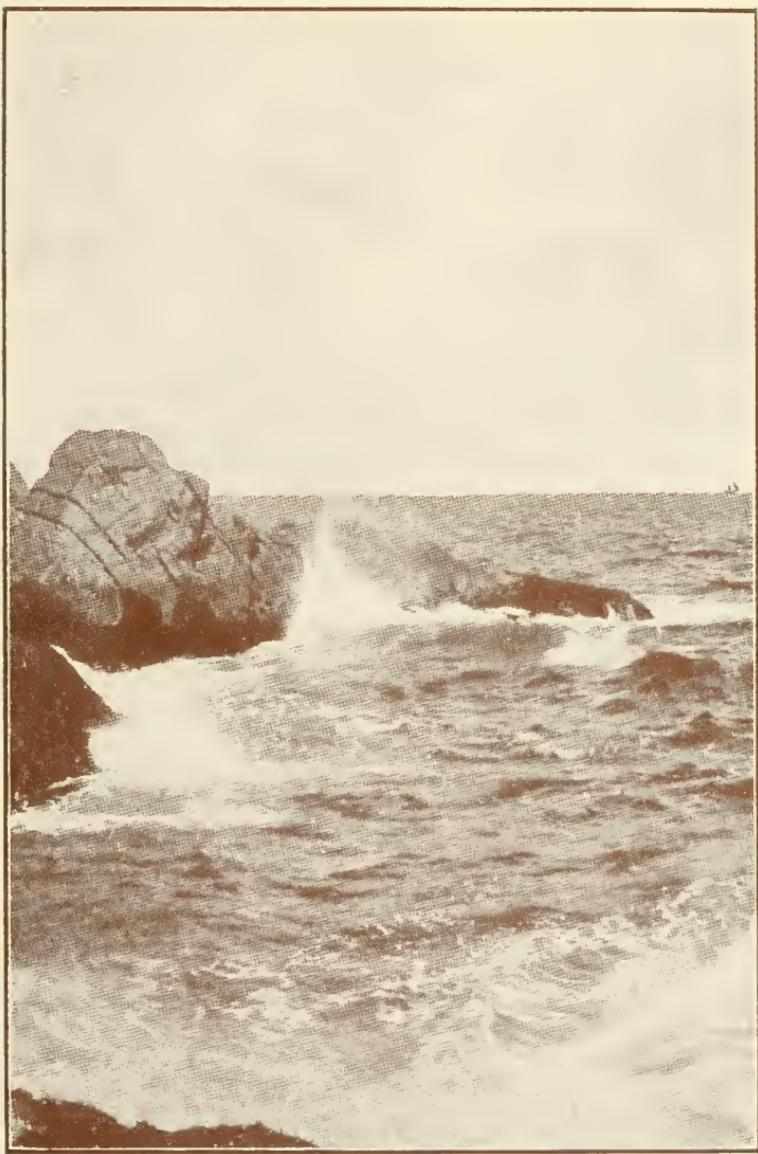
By the rolling sea, on the wave-beat shore,
Is the place I love when the breakers roar ;
When the howling winds drive the angry skies
Till the shadows grow where the sea-gull flies.

When the cloudless sky wears a turpoise hue,
Then the sea replies with a deeper blue ;
And its feathery edge a white rim shows
Where the sandy beach in the sunlight glows.

How the moon's soft rays, in the summer night,
On the dimpling waves paint a path of light ;
And the stars like diamonds gleam afar,
While the sea sobs low on the harbor bar.

There's never a day and never an hour,
When by the sea, but we feel its power ;
And whether its mood be wild or tame,
Its spell is over us just the same.

The years will come and the years will go
While ever its tide will ebb and flow ;
And never its breast rest quietly
Till it laps the shore of eternity.



“By the rolling sea, on the wave-beat shore.”
On Massachusetts Coast

SCHOOLDAYS IN THE COUNTRY

In the dewy morning, over hills and dales,
Merry voices ringing, shining dinner-pails;
Up the hill they scramble towards the schoolhouse door,
Just as you and I did,—many years before.

Little barefoot Tommy, Rob and sister Sue,
Curly-headed Mary in her suit of blue.
Row by row they're seated, faces all aglow,
'Cepting "Stubby Peter," sliver in his toe.

Teacher calls to order, "Class in 'rithmetic,
Places at the blackboard, every one be quick."
How the chalk does rattle till the problem's done;
Bennie proves the victor, calls out "Number one."

Now the writing lesson; see them try to write,
Noses near the paper, some with tongue in sight;
Little heads a-twisting, think they'll do it better;
Gracious! what an effort, just to make a letter.

So the lessons follow till the noon is near;
Then a solemn stillness while they wait to hear
Just a little tingle, then with rush and roar,
From the desks and benches, out the schoolhouse door

Pour the lads and lasses, bound to have some fun,
Every minute precious till the clock strikes one.
"School-days in the country"; were you ever in it?
What a world of gladness pressed in every minute.

BY THE SEA: A RETROSPECT

On the curving beach we stroll
While the west is a rosy light,
Till the flash where the breakers roll
Discovers the Queen of Night.

The stars are so bright, seems the story true,
That some time they might have been
Just windows through the arch of blue,
To let heaven's glory in.

The lights on the dancing waters
Seem playing at hide and seek;
While we watch with a thrill of feeling,
That language can not speak.

The beautiful night is o'er us,
Like a master touching the strings,
Its charm plays sweetly on our hearts
Till a heavenly melody sings.

Our thoughts are ever returning,
Like little waves kissing the shore,
To the past with an infinite yearning
To live it all over once more.

THE SEA MYSTERY

There's a charm unknown to the dweller far
From the sandy shore where the breakers are,
To feel the spell that will round you twine,
In the summer even on the sand recline,
While the rosy glow of the waning light
Waves a parting kiss to the starry night.

Over the sea, over the sea,
Gaze while the waves chant a soft melody,
Lapping incessantly, lapping the shore,
Giving and taking, but taking far more,
Till the curves on the beach grow wide in their reach
And the undertow carries the sand to its store.

Over the sea, over the sea,
Look till enthralled by the sea mystery,
Your life in the past dissolves from your view
And you seemingly enter the far -away blue.

'Tis the charm of the sea, clinging, holding you tight
That keeps you, a watcher, far into the night
Till, breaking its spell, you wander away.
But know it will draw you again some day.



"Giving and taking, but taking far more." Photo by William Norris
On Maine Coast

THE OLD WOOLEN JACKET

How dear to my heart are the clothes of my childhood,
Though rarely, if ever, I had any new,
The straw hat, the jumper, the pants that were patched
good;

No bare spots appeared till my feet came in view.
The old woolen jacket that hung by the door;
How often at night on returning from school,
I found it the source of exquisite comfort
To button it tight when the weather was cool.

The old woolen jacket,
The patch-covered jacket,
The heavy, warm jacket
That hung by the door.

That old woolen jacket, when new, was a beauty,
And worn by the brother then oldest in line,
From brother to brother it slowly descended
Until at the last that jacket was mine.
'Twas stretched in the arm-holes, 'twas torn in the
collar;
Its colors were many, like Joseph's, of old,
Though striped in front and patches around it,
In the cold winds of winter 'twas better than gold.

The old woolen jacket,
The patch-covered jacket,
The heavy, warm jacket
That hung by the door.

Near "the old oaken bucket."

HAYING, SOME MEMORY TALKS

Did you ever smell the new-mown grass,
Or ever have leisure the time to pass,
Though short, yet sweet, in the field to rest
While the haying season was at its best?
If so, you heard the birds' sweet song,
You watched, you listened, and waited long,
And shortened the time for your homeward walk
You can't forget, there'll be memory talk

In a quiet way,
Of the pleasures you had that summer day.

Down in the meadow in haying time,
In days of old, when the scythes would chime,
While the men, in shirts and overalls,
Would whet them sharp for many falls
Of the waving grass into winrows sweet,
And the straw-hat boy with scratched bare feet
Would spread it wide with his two-tined fork;
Is the place that makes my memory talk

In a quiet way,
Of the old home farm and making hay.

And then, in the fervid afternoon
We would rake the hay up none too soon,
For the thunder-heads in the west appeared
Like fleece from a sheep that was newly sheared;
No time to waste, 'twas the workers' test,
For the clouds grew darker in the west,
'Twas a rush to the barn, to run, not walk;
And that, too, makes my memory talk

In a quiet way,
Of how we escaped the shower that day.

POEMS FROM LIFE'S EXPERIENCE

IN THE FOREST

Roaming idly in the forest
In the leafy month of June,
Is a charm that wraps the senses,
When all nature is in tune.
Beautiful in early morning
Just to wander, careless, free,
In the silence that is broken
Only by the melody
Of the happy, joyous songsters.
Praise of nature they intone
Far above the danger region,
Each a king upon his throne.

Sit upon the bank and listen
While the brook across your path
Ripples soft, and sunlight arrows
Shoot a beauteous aftermath.
Watch the branches gently swaying,
Bowing to the summer breeze;
See the lights and shadows playing,
Woodland fairies 'mid the trees.
Then look upward through the rifting,
See the glorious azure blue
Hovering over little cloudlets,
Tiny cloudlets, white and new.
You will love her kindly wooing,
Feel the grasp of Nature's hand,
Giving you the strength for doing,
Acting, meeting life's demand.



"Sit upon the bank and listen." Photo by D. J. Ruzicka

ONE SUMMER NIGHT

Breaking gently in milky foam,
Then returning, again to come;
Constant never,
Coqueting ever.

Trimming with lace the curving shore,
With silver fringing it o'er and o'er;
Thus did the waves, one summer night,
While we watched them play in the mellow light

The moon looked down on an opal sea,
Which softly sang a lullaby;
Born of the spirit of sad unrest,
Flashing the diamonds on its breast.

O, never a fairer sight was seen
Than met our gaze that summer e'en;
The long white reach
Of the sandy beach,

Bathed in a marvelous pearly light,
Beckoned us on through the beauteous night;
It seemed like a walk on the Heavenly shore,
By the boundless sea of the Evermore

'Twas a night to live in memory,
Just the fairest picture there,
To calm the troubled spirit,
Like the breath of an angel's prayer.

A haze, like the rainbow's shadow,
Crept down the arched sky,
Weaving with warp of moonlight
A royal canopy,
Whose folds were pinned with starlights,
Whose beauty draped the sea,
And all the realm of nature
Was one grand harmony.



"The moon looked down on an opal sea."
On Massachusetts Coast

A TRIP TO CHILDHOOD

Could we roll back the curtain that covers the past,
Could we clear from life's shore the sands of time,
We would see the blue skies with no clouds overcast,
And hear the joy-bells of our childhood chime.

Then the path will seem brighter as farther we go,
While we enter the region of joys' overflow,
And the schoolmates we loved will seemingly say
"Come nearer and nearer, come join in our play."

There are sweet little faces, the boys and the girls,
Bareheaded they frolic, child-nature unfurls;
Their shouting and laughing brings the times as of old;
We've reached the joy-harbor, we're back in the fold.

'Tis our childhood again—then the curtain drops down
And the waves of the past recede from the shore;
The pathway now leads from the cross to the crown
In the Beautiful Land of the Evermore.

A SONG

RINGING OF THE CHIMES

Chimes were sweetly ringing.
Ringing one summer eve,
Dropping their musical diamonds
Down in a fairy sieve
Made by the lights and shadows
Floating beneath the trees.
Gently woven together
By the soft evening breeze

Chimes were ringing, ringing.
Ringing each joyful bell,
Dropping their musical diamonds
The old, old songs to tell.

Sitting there, I listened,
Listened to hear their ring;
Ringing the old-time music,
Songs that I used to sing;
Then, when their musical story
Ended at twilight's fall,
Waves of the past were bringing
Songs from my memory's hall

Chimes were ringing, ringing.
Ringing each joyful bell,
Dropping their musical diamonds
The old, old songs to tell

Long-lost melodies, creeping
Out of the sands of time,
Tuned by my fanciful musings.

POEMS FROM LIFE'S EXPERIENCE

Tuned to a tone sublime;
Moonlight, shadowy visions,
Visions of olden times,
Folded their charms around me,
Moved by the ringing chimes.

Chimes were ringing, ringing,
Ringing each joyful bell,
Dropping their musical diamonds
The old, old songs to tell.

(One summer eve, while sitting under the trees in the Boston public garden, near to the many churches.)

A SONG

A LIGHT FROM PARADISE

I dreamed that I sailed on a river fair
Towards the heavenly Jerusalem,
While from far away, all the golden day,
Came sweet songs from the angels' home.

A storm swept the waters, the daylight fled,
Dark the night, fierce the wind and cold,
But I knew that the King of that heavenly land
Would bring me safe into His fold.

I dreamed that the King sent his angels down,
That they played on their harps of gold,
Till the storm was stilled and my soul was thrilled
While the harmonies upward rolled.

The darkness of night sped softly away,
Ne'er a cloud in the sky's blue dome,
Then a glorious Light shone from Paradise
And I knew I was almost home.



"Moonlight, shadowy visions." Photo by E. C. Moore. Lake Michigan, near Muskegon

THE COTTAGER

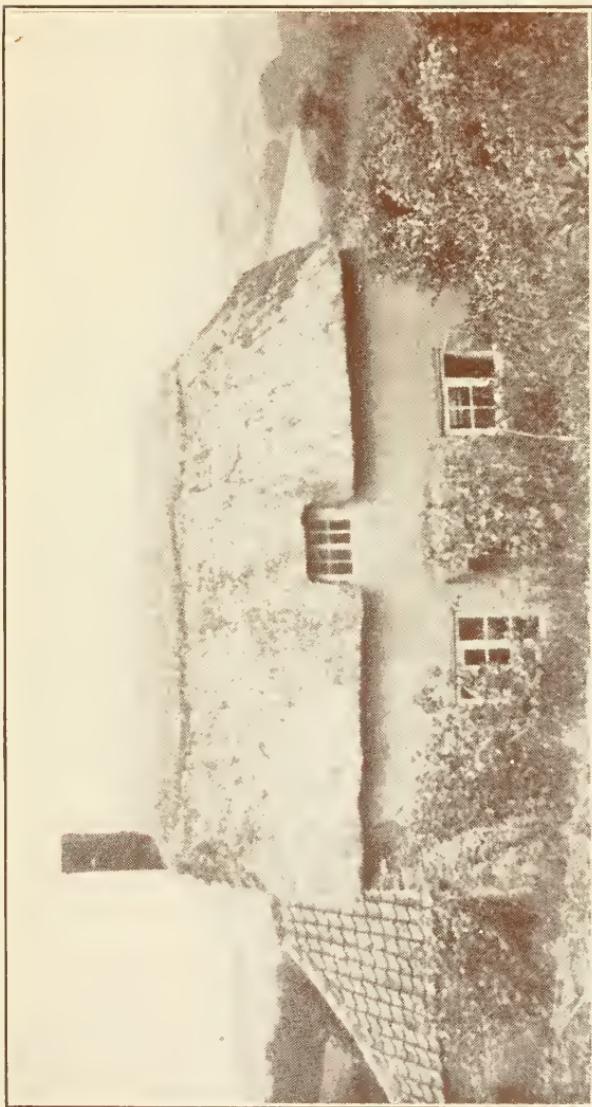
When the setting sun with its slanting rays
On the fleecy clouds paints a crimson blaze,
And the swallows nest in the roof of thatch,
Then his door swings wide with its loosened latch,
And the cottager loves in his easy chair
To sit and rest in comfort there.

To him kind Nature gifts will bring,
The flowers will bloom, the birds will sing,
And the waving grass on the hillsides green
Is a picture fair as the eye hath seen;
And though he works and digs the ditch,
He envys not the idle rich.

For when his long days' work is done,
Work since the rising of the sun,
His little children often come
To meet him ere he reaches home,

And happy pass the evening hours
Amid the vines and leafy bowers
That cluster round his cottage door;
Contented there, he wants no more.

There's happiness in country life,
Free from the endless toil and strife
That often mar and leave their trace
On many a one-time happy face.



Home of a Cottager, about 1600 years old, in Somersetshire, England.
Photo by Charles Hawkins, Cleveland, Ohio.



"In the shade of the old garden apple tree, resting."
Photo by E. R. Bolander

ROSES

Down in the garden I wandered one morn,
Looking for roses sweet;
Roses in blossom with night dews thereon,
Robed in a beauty complete.
Searching, I found the fairest ones there,
Born while the stars shone above;
Breathing their fragrance, their perfume rare.
Sweet as a message of love.

Only the best of the roses I took,
Roses I knew she would prize;
Payment in full would be her kind look,
Just a look from the dearest blue eyes.
I gave her the roses, said never a word,
But watched the light shine in her eyes,
And then, in return, no language was heard.
Her gift was the sweetest surprise.

SPRINGTIME

In the shade of the old garden apple tree resting;
While breezes play softly 'mid blossoms and leaves.
And in its green branches the robins are nesting;
Glad notes of the springtime my fancy receives.
A perfume delicious my breath is inhaling,
The arch of the sky wears a lovely May blue,
And over its sea the white clouds are sailing,
Till, harbored in sunlight, they vanish from view.

Now down by the meadows where flowers are springing,
The swallows are curving in crescents of light,
While sweet on the air falls the jubilant singing
Of birds new redeemed from the winter's long night
O, glorious springtime, when earth is awaking,
And Nature in beautiful garments is dressed;
Thy smile giveth life to each day's undertaking,
Thy generous heart ever brings us the best.

THAT MORNING RIDE

'Twas a happy couple that summer morn
Bill tooted and tooted his auto horn,
And Molly beside him, dressed in white,
Was very bewitching, a lovely sight.

The ride by many a fertile farm
With its fields of corn gave added charm,
And the Jersey cows were chewing over
Again their feed of sweetest clover.

Bill looked at Moll, Moll looked at Bill,
There were hunger signs though they kept still
At last Bill said, "What shall we eat?
Berries and cream would be a treat.

POEMS FROM LIFE'S EXPERIENCE

There's a basketful in the box behind
With a jar of cream, of the Jersey kind,
Saucers and spoons you'll find there, too;
Now Molly dear, it's up to you."

They stopped beneath a royal oak,
So full of joy that neither spoke;
Those berries and that Jersey cream
Soon vanished like a summer dream.

A SONG

THE SCHOOLHOUSE ON THE HILL.

In the golden summer morning,
Down the sunny winding road,
By the verdant, flowery meadows;
How my heart with joy o'erflowed—
O, the happy days of childhood,
Recollection brings a thrill,
As in fancy now I wander
Near the schoolhouse on the hill.

Birds are singing by the wayside,
There's a nest 'mid bowers of green,
Berries ripe stain little fingers
While they search the briars between;
Wealth of beauty, joy and sunshine,
Nature's best our longings fill
While we trudge along the pathway
Towards the schoolhouse on the hill

POEMS FROM LIFE'S EXPERIENCE

Blue the skies that shine above it,
Curtained by the whispering trees,
Rich the memories clustering round it.
Sweeter than the summer breeze.
Smooth and hollow is its doorstep,
Worn and thin nits ancient sill
By the little feet that entered
In the schoolhouse on the hill.



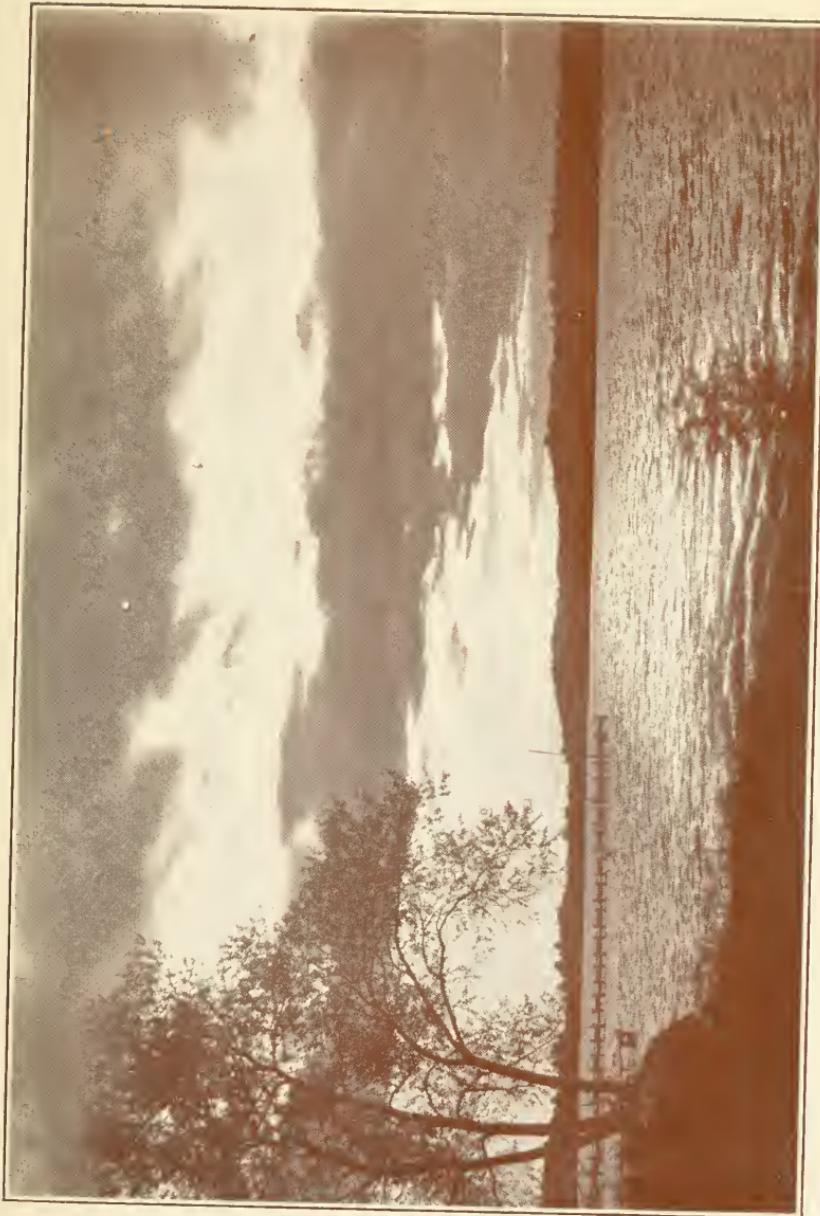
"In the golden summer morning." Photo by W. L. Pond
In Brooklyn, Conn.

POPPING THE QUESTION

Miss Sallie sat by the window,
Waiting for Jimmie to come,
Daintily clad in her Sunday's,
Chewing her spearmint gum,
Thinking and thinking and hoping.
Hoping tonight he would pop,
For Jim had a bad hesitation,
When started, 'twas that made him stop.

Mother was near in the kitchen,
Daddy reading by dim candle light,
Moonlight outside was bewitching,
Now surely he'd pop it tonight.
Soon Jimmie appeared in the gateway,
Quick Sallie met him at the door,
"Nice evening," he said with a stutter,
Then stopped for he couldn't say more.

In the parlor they sat on the sofa,
But Jimmie in silence remained,
I'll pop it myself, thought Miss Sallie,
And then there will be something gained.
So laying her head on his shoulder,
She gave him a gentle caress,
"Will you marry me, Jimmie," she uttered,
And Jimmie quite faintly said "Yes."



"Moonlight outside was bewitching."

IN THE TRUNDLE-BED

Three little tots in the trundle-bed,
To the land of Nod in their dreams have fled,
And often a smile, while you gaze, appears
which the fairies gave to the little dears.

The three little tots in the trundle-bed,
Would lie so still till their prayers were said,
But after mother had said good-night,
And tucked them into the bed-clothes tight,

They would tumble and roll till you couldn't tell
Where Tommy began, or which was Nell,
And Jimmie, the leader, would shout with glee
While his head would bob where his feet should be.

And Tommy by poking the sheet up high
Would make a white tent in which they could lie;
They frolicked and laughed, were a noisy crew,
Each tried to do more than the others could do.

But tired at last, father's voice they heard,
"Children, keep still," soon they hardly stirred.
So the three little tots in the trundle-bed,
To the land of Nod then quickly fled.



One of the "Three Little Tots."

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